The Country-Man's Proposal:

OR, A

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN A

Gentleman and a Farmer.

WHEREIN

The Farmer shews how this Nation may raise the Queen 20000 *l* every Day in the Year, and neither have Malt nor Salt Tax, nor charge any Man's Land above 2 *s.* in the *Pound*, and to maintain this War with *France* Twenty Years, and the Nation not one Half-penny the worse.

The Second Edition Corrected and Enter'd according to Act of Parliament

By *Richard Cooper*, Farmer in the County of NOTTINGHAM

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To the Right Honourable the Lord High-Treasurer of Great-Britain, and the Good People of England.

THE Complaints of Taxes, the unequal way of Levying them, the great Expence in Collecting them, and the visible want of Trade, together with the heavy Debts the Nation is involv'd in, being almost General, and the publick Discourse in every Market, made me often talk over these few following Proposals, which I here present thee with, Intituled, The Country-Man's Proposal; there is little or nothing added but what I have said to Gentlemen, and what they have said to me, in Answer to each other. And that which most ingaged me to appear in so publick a manner, was, because I see Interest now preferred before Honour, but I am of Opinion that every right English-Man prefers his Repute and Honour before Interest; and therefore I would have all Men ingage themselves freely in this Common-Cause against France, and not be in Love with a French Government, but all in their Stations freely, chearfully and honestly, and say,

Our Ancestors shan't Curse us in their Tombs,
Nor shall our Children in their Mother's Wombs;
They left us Free and we them Free will leave,
Or Death our Hopes and us shall both deceive.

The

The Country-Man's

PROPOSAL, &c.

Gentleman.] WELL met Country-man, what News in *Nottinghamshire*?

Farm.] No great News, Sir, but she groans under the four great Grievances of the Nation with her Sister Counties.

Gent.] Old Man, what are those?

Farm.] The greatness of Taxes, the unequal levying of them, the large Expence in collecting of them, and the want of Trade.

Gent.] We are ingaged in an expensive War, and Money is the Sinews of War, and without Taxes and Money raising, we should have but a feeble War.

Farm.] Well, Sir, I believe this Nation can raise the Queen Twenty thousand Pounds a Day for every Day in the Year, and neither have Malt-Tax nor Salt-Tax, nor charge any Man's Land above 2 s. in the *Pound*.

Gent.] How! Old Man, thou talk'st now, but how may it be done?

Farm.] Sir, above fifty Years ago there was a valuation of the Rents of this Kingdom taken, and also a Value of the Wares, Money and Merchandize, and 100 l. in Money or Merchandize, was valued with 5 l.

a-Year Land. And then, if I have been rightly informed, it came to 44 Millions and upwards; and charge that at 2 s. in the Pound, and that will come to four Millions 400000 l. And I have been alſo informed that the Exciſe of Beer, Ale and other Liquours brings in 20000 l. a Week, all charges expended, and if ſo, we may ſuppoſe it coſteth 20000 l. a Week Collecting, that is two Millions 600000 l. which will make up the 400000 l. 7 Millions, and then we want but 300000 l. to make up 20000 l. a Day, and the Cuſtoms of this Nation will do that and make up the Deficiency of the Exciſe.

Gent.] Yes, but I don't believe the Land will raiſe ſo much, for I don't believe it to be worth ſo much.

Farm.] I have heard what all the Shipping was valued at, and what the Stock and Marchandize came to, but I have forgotten, but am certain that the whole came to forty four *Millions* and upwards, as I was then informed; and I do not believe it any leſs now, if we Tax all that ought to be Taxed.

Gent.] What would ſt thou have Taxed that is not Taxed?

Farm.] I would have an even Tax through the whole Nation, that is, every Thing that neither conduceth to the advancing of the Eſtate or Maintenance of the Family, but Houſhould Goods are a dead weight upon any

or

or every Perſon, and are always wearing out and therefore ought not to be Taxed.

Gent.] What would'ſt thou have Stock upon Land pay?

Farm.] Nay, Sir, I will only propoſe this to you, ſuppoſe a Man hath three Sons and he gives them 500 *l.* a piece, and one lays out his 500 *l.* in Land he pays Taxes for it, and a ſecond lays his 500 *l.* at Intereſt, and pays Taxes for it, or ought to pay for it, but the Third he takes a Farm and imploys his 500 *l.* in Grazing, and he lives better than both the other, and he pays nothing; now, pray, Sir, ſhew me Reaſon why the 500 *l.* imployed in Stock upon Land, ſhould not pay Taxes as free as the 500 *l.* in Land, or the 500 *l.* at Intereſt.

Gent.] Why I tell thee, Old Man, it will be to pay for the Land and the Product alſo.

Farm.] Pray, Sir, do not tell me ſo, for the Wool, Lambs and Fat, are the Product of the Land and not the Stock, for the increaſe of the 500 *l.* in twelve Months time, may bring the 500 *l.* to 800 *l.* and the 300 *l.* that is made of Wool, Lambs and Fat, is the Product of the Land, and now, pray Sir, give me leave to ask you one Queſtion more, and that is, if a Merchant have a Ship worth 1000 *l.* and a Farmer hath a Farm of his own worth 1000 *l.* whether the Merchant or the Farmer *will* make out the more at the Year's end and *live* the beſt? *Gent.*]

Gent.] Why the Merchant will live better than the Farmer.

Farm.] Then, pray Sir, ſhew me Reaſon why the Merchant ſhould not pay as much Taxes for his Ship as the Farmer for his Land?

Gent.] Well, Old Man, but how ſhall we do to get an equal Valuation, we have ſworn them and done all we can, and yet thou complaineſt of the uneven levying of Taxes and count'ſt it a Grievance of the Nation.

Farm.] So it is, but ſwearing of Men will never get an even Valuation, for ſome Value after one Rule and ſome after another, ſome as their Land was bought perhaps 200 Years ago, and ſome by an old Valuation, and all by as low a Rule as they can.

Gent.] Well, Old Man, how muſt we do then, if Swearing will not do, I cannot tell what will?

Farm.] Why, Sir, paſs an Act that every Man ſhall give in a Valuation of his own Eſtate to two Aſſeſſors, and them to make Report to the Commiſſioners in fair Writing, and him that gives in a falſe Valuation, let him forfeit his Rents and Revenues for ſix Years, and ſtand upon the Pillory for ſix Days as a perjur'd *Perſon*, for it is agreed on all Hands, that *Perjury* deſerves a *Pillory*; to deceive the beſt of Queens and the beſt of Governments, and weakens the Hands of the Nation in a War, on which depends

our

our Lives, our Religion, our Eſtates, our Trade and our All, deſerve a Pillory as well as Perjury.

Gent.] Thou ſayeſt well, Old Man, but there will never be ſuch an Act paſs'd, tho' an equal Valuation would do well, and be wrong to none, but a very juſt Act.

Farm.] Why ſo, Sir, I muſt beg leave to tell you, that he that is againſt an equal Valuation is no good Subject to the Queen, no Friend to the Government, nor an honeſt Man amongſt his Neighbours.

Gent.] How can'ſt thou make that out, Old Man?

Farm.] Very well, for as the Queen is Eyes to the Nation, and hath the Power of making War or Peace, as ſhe ſees it for the good of the Subject, ſo the Subject ſhould be Arms to the Queen, and they cannot be Arms to the Queen, but as they aſſiſt her with Men and Money, he is therefore no good Subject. Secondly, he is no Friend to the Government, for Oppreſſion (*Solomon* ſaith) makes the wiſe Man mad. Now not to raiſe for the Defence of the Nation equally, is Oppreſſion; and that begetteth Envy and Malice and Hatred, and creates ill Blood in the Veins; and let us but look back 60 Years, and ſee the dreadful Effects of changing of Governments. Thirdly, he is no honeſt Man amongſt his Neighbours

becauſe he will not bear his equal Share of the Charge that falls upon the Pariſh or Nation.

Gent.] But, Old Man, this will be Arbitrary, for a Man is no more obliged to diſcover his Eſtate than he is to accuſe himſelf in a Criminal Cauſe.

Farm.] Sir, it would be Arbitrary with a Witneſs, for a Man to pay what the Queen charges him with by her Aſſeſſors, if he had not a Day to appeal and to ſet forth the greatneſs of his Eſtate, is no more Arbitrary than to ſet forth the littleneſs of it.

Gent.] It would ſet us together by the Ears, for we ſhould have Law Suits for one anothers Eſtates.

Farm.] How can that be, with whom can any be offended when we Aſſeſs our ſelves, or who can Sue for our Eſtates if we give in a true Valuation.

Gent.] But it will be hard for a poor Men that hath but three or four Cows and a little end of Sheep and two or three Pigs, that are worth 20 l. to pay 2 s. a Year.

Farm.] Yes, ſo it will, but if it ſave him 3 s. a Year in Malt and Salt, it will make the hard, eaſie.

Gent.] But, Old Man, there are Thouſands Trade upon Credit, and if their Eſtates were known, no body would truſt them, and that would be Ruine.

Farm.]

Farm.) No, Sir, there are many Nobles that truſt Men of ſmall Eſtates, with a great Eſtate, but they are careful and faithful in their Truſt; and ſo it is with wholeſale Men, if poor Men be Induſtrious and make good Pay, they will Truſt tho they be little worth; but for extravagant Men that will live high and ſpend their own Eſtate and other Mens alſo, it is better they were broken than that they ſhould go on till they have bended many more. And now, Sir, I muſt beg leave to tell you, that all the Taxes as now laid do all meet in the Buyer, for Tradeſmen will buy as they can ſell, and ſell as they do buy, and will have the Gain, but it is not ſo with the ſmall Free-holder, for they muſt be content with what it pleaſeth God to ſend him out of the Earth; but the Tradeſman, if the Queen have a Penny he will have a Half-penny, for the Chandler as the Queen hath a Penny in a Pound out of Candles, he will raiſe them three Halfpence, and ſo will the Malſter, Salter, Tanner and Grocer, and ſo will every Tradeſman that hath his vendable Goods Taxed. But let every Man pay equally for what he hath of his own, and then the Burden would not be ſo hard, and there would not be ſuch complaining.

Gent.) Well, Old Man, thou ſayeſt very well, but I fear there will never be ſuch an

Act pass'd as to get an even Valuation, for there are some that will be too much afraid of the Pillory.

Farm.) Why so, Sir, he that pretends he would have *France* lower her Top Sails to *Great-Britain*, and will not be for an equal Valuation, and to have every Man pay an equal Proportion for what he hath, flatters his Queen and dissembles with the Government; for how can he be for the bringing down the Pride of *France* that will not pay his Proportion nor act freely in his Station. Sir, make what Objections you can, I can take them off, and I do verily believe that an even 2 s. Tax, and the Excise of Beer, Ale and other Liquors being freely Collected and paid into the Queen's Coffer without Charge to the Queen, and the Customs will raise Her 20000 l. a Day, and that will maintain Her

	Lib.
20000 Horse at 2 s. 6 d. a Day each	2500
20000 Dragoons at 2 s. a Day each Man	2000
30000 Foot at 1 s. each Man	1500
Sea-Men or Navy a Day	6000
Bumbs, Powder and Ball	0500
Carriages and Artillery	0500
To buy Horses	0500
For Wear and Tear at Sea	1500
To build new Ships	1000
To gratifie the great Officers	2000
To pay off the Interest of the Nations Debts, and the Civil List	2000

or every Day in the Year 20000 *Pounds.*

Gent.) *What would'st thou have the Land Tax and Excise Collected freely?*

Farm.] *Yes.*

Gent.) *The Land Tax may be collected freely but the Excise cannot.*

Farm.] *Yes it may.*

Gent.) *Prithee tell me how it may be collected freely, and neither the Queen nor Subject have wrong.*

Farm.) *So I can Sir, you have all the Books what every Brewer hath paid for every Year these last 7 Years, take the Year the Brewer pays the least in and charge it quarterly, and let it be Collected by the Collecter of the Land-Tax, and both paid to some able Gentleman as Receiver for one Quarter and so another for another Quarter, and so let every Gentleman take his turn as Receiver as well as High Sheriff, and if the Land Tax and Excise raise seven Millions as I believe it will, or not want very much, tho' now it come in at 1 s in the Pound, yet to collect it freely will save the Queen 350000 l. a Year, and that is considerable and would make a fine Treat both in Army and Navy; for if I do not miss cast a Million of Shillings is 50000 l.*

Gent.) *What, old Man, you would have nobody paid for what they do for the Queen.*

Farm.) *Yes, I would as much as any Man when there is but common Business, but now there is an especial occasion, for France must fall on*

us

we, and therefore I would have every one act freely in their Station, and it would make the War not thought Chargeable, nor the Burden so heavy, for give a Tenth of the Nation, that is a 2 s. Tax, and the Excise, and feed but our own Army with our own Beef, and let them eat our own Bread, wear our own Cloaths and ride our own Horses, in a Word, but maintain the War with the Product of our own Nation, and we can maintain this War till France be weary of us, and beg of us to call our Army home, nay, and pay us well too, or else I am mistaken; for to have our Army ready to penitrate into their Nation, and them always to lie upon the Defence, will make their Hearts ake in a little time, for when they have Plowed and Sown or Planted, they must by Force of Arms defend it from us, which will be found hard Work.

Gent.) What wouldst thou have us maintain our Army there?

Farm.) Yes I would, and that would make a run of Money through our own Nation, and make a brisk Trade at home, for take 100000 Men out of a Nation and leave their Maintenance behind them, and it must make it lie in heaps, and to maintain them with Money by remittance or otherways, is like opening a Vein and bleeding all the Blood out of a Man's Body for our Coin is the Blood of the Nation.

Gent.) We cannot do it, we cannot do it, we cannot maintain our Army I am certain.

Farm.)

Farm.) *Pray you, Sir, do not tell me so, we can maintain our Army, though I have heard many Gentleman say as you do, we cannot; and now, Sir, we can send them 30000 Beefs, 60000 Hogs, 60000 Hundreds of Cheese and 120000 Quarters of Grain in Biskets, Meal, Peas and Oatmeal; and what will most suite them, or what they stand the most need of, for I would have them Cloath'd out of our* Nation *like Gentlemen, fed like Freeholders, and arm'd like Giants*

Gent.] Thou talkest at Random, this would undoe our Nation, if we maintained our Army out of our own Nation, we should have some starved at Home.

Farm.] I will shew you that would be but a Flea-biting to the Nation, for I am informed that we have about 10000 *Parishes*, and one with another I believe they are 60 Houses or Families. Now 30000 Beefs is three out of a *Parish*, that is one out of 20 Families; and suppose that the Beefs weigh ten Stone and a quarter at 14 pound to the Stone, when the Neck and Shanks are taken away, and that is but 28 *Pound* in the whole Year for a Family, that is but little above half a pound in a Week; and 60000 Hogs are six out of a *Parish*, and that is two Hogs in twenty Families, and suppose they weigh'd 15 Stone, 14 pound to the Stone, that is but 21 *Pound* in a Family for a whole

Year;

Year; and 60000 Hundred of Cheese is but 12 Pound in a Family in a Year; and 120000 Quarter of Grain is but four Quarters in 20 Families, and that is not all out of Pecks and a half for a Family in a whole Year, and so much in the Year is not to be accounted any thing. Nay, Sir, this Foreign War can never harm *England* do but levy Taxes even and collect them freely and promote a Trade both at home and abroad; but home-bred War is like a raging Fever that seizeth on every Part of a Man's Body. A Gentleman may have a good Stock over Night and none in the Morning, or a House well furnished in the Morning and not a Bed before Night left to lie in.

Gent.) Well, old Man, thou sayest that the 2 s. Tax and the Excise of Beer, Ale and other Liquors, collected freely, and the Custom will maintain the War, provided we feed them with our own Bread and Beef, and let them wear our own Cloaths, and ride our own Horses, that is, thou meanest to carry on the War with the Product of our own Nation, this is what thou sayest.

Farm.) Yes, Sir, and do so, and where is the Spoil, for then if we pay our Money it is laid out again amongst us, and it will make a Trade and Landlords will have their Rents well paid, and the Farmer will have Money to set the Poor to work better than

now

now they have only our Foreign Trade, for Cloath lies dead. It is believ'd that the Wool Trade imploys a Fifth Part of the Nation or above.

Gent.) How can that be help'd the Seas are so dangerous?

Farm.) *Why, Sir, I would have Letters of Marte with all the World, and let the Merchant Trade where he can get a Penny, and that would keep us at Peace with all the World, for he that gets by me will never differ with me.*

Gent.) *Nay, Old Man, must we Trade with our Enemies?*

Farm.) *So I would, for if he gets 2 d. by me, if I get 3 d. by him, I shall hold out as long as he can.*

Gent.) *Thou wilt not pretend to teach the Government?*

Farm.) *No, Sir, if I have said more than becomes a Member of his Head, or a Peasant of his Peer, or an Elector of his Elected, I humbly beg Pardon: But I must say one thing more and not without some little Passion; If you would make the Queen Great, the Nation Safe and the Subject Ease, you must levy Taxes even, Collect them freely, and promote Trade, for who can think much at an even Valuation, when he pays but his Share with his Neighbours, or who can grudge a free Collection, when no Man gets by it, or who can complain of a brisk Trade when there is Money for every thing and*

good

good Pay for the Work, and all this would be if we did but maintain our Army out of our own Nation. But if there should be a Deficiency in all this, I hope Holland *and* Ireland *may do something; but I hope there would be no Deficiency, if it might be done. I will only propose four Questions to you, Sir, and leave them for you or any Gentleman to Answer, viz.*

I. What Reason can be given why Persons having an equal Benefit by the War should not pay an equal Proportion? II. What Reason can be given that an Act should not be pass'd for to get an equal Valuation under a severe Penalty? III. What Reason can be given that every Man should not Act in his or their Station as Receiver or Collector, freely, seeing during the War we are under such an Obligation for to raise Money at as cheap a Rate as we can, for it is now that *France* must either truckle to us or we to them? IV. Whether a Gentleman had not better serve his Queen and Country one Quarter as Receiver freely, than to lie in the Head of a Regiment in *Flanders* or *Spain* for his Pay?

FINIS.

Just Publish'd,

AN Account of the dreadful Shipwreck of Captain John Dean *and his Company, in the Nottingham Galley, December the 11th, 1711. Sold by the Publisher of this Paper,* Pr. 1d.